

## More about Born in Blood

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All Lodge of Research Members should have either read Robinson's '*Born in Blood*' or own the book. This lodge used to have a copy but it has been mislaid.

In the summer issue of this year's Freemason appeared a review by Zel Eaton of the book 'Born in Blood', by John J. Robinson. I am prompted to write this article by a conclusion drawn by Mr. Robinson about the origin of Freemasonry. In his review Mr. Eaton alludes to this aspect of the book only vaguely.

I am referring to Mr. Robinson's theory that modern Masonry actually had its origin from the Knights Templar, outlawed in 1312 by Pope Clement V and the French King Philip the Fair. It was Mr. Robinson's conclusion that the Templars not apprehended went under-ground to escape the heavy hand of the Papacy and then resurfaced centuries later as lodges of Freemasons.

Most traditional Masonic researchers, of course, have contended that the Order and its ritual somehow developed from the early crude organizations of the stone mason labour guilds. I, for one, have never been able to accept that view. Several years ago I arrived independently at the same conclusion as Mr. Robinson. Our Masonic ritual, steeped as it is in Kabalistic occultism and mystery ceremonials of the Middle East, could never possibly have been developed out of the crude beginnings of the stonemason guilds. In that era even the skilled artisans and their speculative associates were far too unlettered and unlearned to have been capable of coming up with anything as elaborate and esoteric as even the earliest forms of Masonic ritual. Knowledge of the Hebrew Kabal and the Middle Eastern mystery dramas had been ruthlessly suppressed by the Papacy during the Dark Ages and could have returned to Western Europe only by way of the Crusades. For bringing it back, the Templars became the logical bridge. During their stay in the Holy Land, the Templars had come into close association with a Moslem sect called the Sufi, who previously had adopted many of the beliefs and ritualistic forms of the Gnostic, or primitive Christians. From the Sufi, the Templars borrowed many of their own esoteric beliefs and ceremonials. A number of these have made their way into modern Freemasonry. One of these, for example, is the Junior Warden's call of the Craft from labour to refreshment and from refreshment to labour, referring in a symbolic sense to death and rebirth. The Gnostics, the Sufi, and the Templars all believed in reincarnation.

Is this view about Masonic origins borne out by any prestigious Masonic scholars? Yes, it certainly is by one of our most celebrated scholars, Brother Albert Pike. My readings in Brother Pike's *Morals and Dogma* have convinced me that Mr. Robinson, in his recent book, was on the right track. Jacques B. de Molai, the last Grand Master of the Knights Templar, according to Brother Pike, masterminded the plans for Freemasonry while he was awaiting execution. Before coining in unequivocally to that assertion, Brother Pike cited conclusive evidence that long before the Templars went underground, they considered themselves builders, or masons, and were even called by the English, through careless pronunciation, Freemasons. This is clearly shown by the following extract with reference to de Molai: "The Templars, or Poor Fellow Soldiery of the Holy House of the Temple intended to be rebuilt, took as their models, in the Bible, the Warrior Masons of Zorabel, who worked, holding the sword in one hand and the trowel in the other. Therefore, it was that the Sword and the Trowel became the insignia of the Templars, who subsequently concealed themselves under the name of Brethren Masons. The name Freres Masons in the French was corrupted in English into Free Masons. The trowel of the Templars is quadruple, and the triangular plates of it are arranged in the form of a cross, making the Kabalistic pantacle known by the name of the Cross of the East."

On page 820 of *Morals and Dogma*, Brother Pike leaves no doubt that he considered Freemasonry the brain child of Jacques de Molai, as this extract will indicate. "But before his execution, the Chief of the doomed Order organized and instituted what afterward came to be called the Occult, Hermetic, or Scottish Masonry. In the gloom of his prison, the Grand Master created four Metropolitan Lodges, at Naples for the East, at Edinburgh for the West, at Stockholm for the North, and at Paris for the South.

The initials of his name, J.B.M., found in the same order in the first three degrees are but one of the many internal and cogent proofs that such was the origin of modern Free Masonry.' Brother Pike's reference to the

initials, of course, is to the words Jachin, Boaz, and the Master's Word in the third degree. Could this be a mere coincidence?

Brother Pike then went on to say that "The legend of Osiris was revised and adopted as the central theme of the third degree ritual, to symbolize the destruction of the Order, and the resurrection of Khurum, slain in the body of the Temple of Khurum Abai, the Master, as the martyr of fidelity to obligation, of Truth and Conscience."

According to the legend of Osiris here referred to, as the fragments of the god's body lay on the ground, a lion reached down with his paw, scooped up the pieces, and lifted them back again to erect and living form. In the new Order succeeding the Templars this served as a symbolism. The Papacy and the King had slain the Grand Master but failed to accomplish their purpose. The grip of the lion's paw had triumphed again over extinction. The prostrate corpse of the Knights Templar had been raised from death. Once again it lived in the form of a new Order....Freemasonry. The old Order, vitally obsessed with building, lived on as builders still. The trowel remained still as its principal working tool. The Templars continued their role as "Brethren Masons."

Why are Freemasons so obsessed with the Holy Saints John? "Oh, the labour guilds were expected to have patron saints, so the stone masons adopted the Holy Saints John.' We have all read that lame explanation. If a labour guild wanted patron saints, why would it choose two saints with contrasting religious beliefs? For the Knights Templar to do so was perfectly logical, as Brother Pike took note in *Morals and Dogma*. From their very inception, the Templars functioned as a dualistic Order. Their avowed and pretended purpose was to protect Christians making pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Their actual and secret objective was to rebuild the Temple of King Solomon to recapture its original splendour and restore Jerusalem to the days of its pristine glory. In their outward aspects they posed as loyal supporters of orthodox Catholicism. This facade they craftily cultivated to gain the approval and sanction of the papacy. For this reason they adopted John the Baptist as one of their patron saints. St. John the Evangelist, however, was the one who had been regarded as the spokesman of the Gnostic religious views to which they adhered and wished to make supreme in their restored city of Jerusalem, designed by them secretly to displace Rome as the centre of Christendom. St. John the Evangelist, therefore, became their most cherished patron saint. If Freemasonry did indeed stem from the Templars, it is only natural that the Masons would also adopt both of these patron saints.

Since the Templars chief objective was the rebuilding of King Solomon's Temple, one would reasonably expect them to continue in that preoccupation when they established a new Order to succeed the Templars. Need there be any mystery, then, as to why Freemasonry is similarly obsessed with the same Temple?

The Templar Connection would also nicely explain the mystery of the "bloody" Masonic obligations. If the Templars had any part in drafting these obligations, we would expect them to be fraught with dire consequences. We say today that the obligations are intended to be only symbolical. To a Templar member of the early guilds or lodges they would not have been considered symbolical. A Templar was a marked man with a price on his head. The long aim of the Papacy could reach him even in non-Catholic Scotland. Wherever he fled, there was always the threat of hired assassins. He could take no chances of having his identity or activities revealed. Many of the other secrets of Freemasonry can be similarly accounted for as safe-guarding the security of the Templars who probably dominated the earliest lodges.

In one respect perhaps the traditionalists were right. Perhaps Freemasonry did develop in and come down to us from the stonemason guilds of Scotland. Its concept and ritual, however, could not have been originated by the stonemasons per se. Perhaps the Templars who escaped to Scotland decided to infiltrate the stonemason guilds and introduce their system of de Molai's new Order. They had very good reasons to do so. The Templars had also been builders, or masons. In their heyday the Templars had exerted complete control over not only the stonemasons but also over all other skilled craftsmen throughout Western Europe. That being true, the Templars would obviously have experienced little difficulty trying to infiltrate the guilds.

As a final argument for the Templar Connection, we should not forget the religious element. Freemasonry is regarded as a semi-religious Order. If the Templars did really found Masonry, it would be surprising if they hadn't placed a very strong emphasis on religion, because the Knights Templar was instituted primarily as a religious Order.